

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

September 18, 1951

Role of Psychological Strategy Board under
14/51 Presidential Directive

The President's Directive creates an agency (Psychological Strategy Board) to provide more effective planning of psychological operations within the framework of approved national policies, to coordinate the psychological operations of all departments and agencies of government, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the national psychological effort.

The members of the Board are the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence. The decisions of the Board are carried out by a Director, appointed by the President. A representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sits with the Board as its principal military adviser; and the Board may add to its number from time to time appropriate representatives of the heads of other governmental units.

The Board is the nerve-center for strategic psychological operations. At the apex of government, it provides a single office for assuring the planned use by all governmental units of activities to influence the opinions, attitudes, emotions and behavior of foreign groups in ways that will support the achievement of our approved national aims. Through the Board, the President is enabled to turn to one body, instead of many, for a prompt assessment of psychological operations--as to magnitude, emphasis, pace, effectiveness, and responsibility for execution. Thus, a unified base is afforded from which to take from an enemy the initiative in psychological operations.

The Board itself does not engage in operations. It is not concerned with day-to-day problems arising in the psychological field, except as they may affect progress toward major strategic objectives. The Directive reposes in the Board the responsibility for overall psychological policies, objectives, and programs, and their coordination among the various departments and agencies; provides for adjustments to be made by such departments and agencies in their existing arrangements in this regard; and amends previous National Security Council instructions to that extent.

To execute its role:

1. The Board will prepare, in order to determine the framework of its action under the Directive, a comprehensive inventory of those approved national policies which may directly or indirectly involve psychological operations; recommending to the National Security Council the adoption of such additional policies as may be deemed advisable.

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2. In support of such approved national policies, the Board will formulate and promulgate overall policies, programs, and objectives for psychological operations; including overall strategic plans in such detail as to enable operational planning by departments and agencies.

3. The Board will stimulate all departments and agencies engaged in operations having psychological aspects, to set up effective psychological operational plans:

a. by assigning to such departments and agencies the preparation of psychological operational plans to carry out any part of such overall strategic plans as to which no psychological operational planning has been initiated;

b. by reviewing all psychological operational plans already initiated by departments and agencies in order to assure that they are consistent with such overall strategic plans, determining those plans which may be left to the initiating departments and agencies without further action by the Board and those plans as to which the Board should take some further action.

4. The Board will determine as to the various psychological operational plans: (1) emphasis, (2) priority, and (3) pace.

5. The Board will coordinate the execution by departments and agencies of all such plans within the framework of overall strategic plans.

6. The Board will evaluate the programs of departments and agencies and their execution through psychological operational plans, in terms of effective accomplishment of the national psychological effort; selecting programs and plans for evaluation without any commitment to survey the entire field.